

# First records of Lemon Dove *Aplopelia larvata* for Angola

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Premières mentions du Pigeon à masque blanc *Aplopelia larvata* pour l'Angola. Le chant d'un Pigeon à masque blanc *Aplopelia larvata* a été entendu et enregistré dans la forêt de Kumbira, Cuanza Sul, le 23 septembre 2005, mais l'oiseau n'a pas été vu. Le 2 août 2005, deux individus ont pu être observés de près, confirmant l'identité de l'espèce. Quoique sa présence dans le pays était suspectée, elle n'avait jamais été confirmée; ceci constituent donc les premières données documentées pour l'Angola.

On 23 September 2005, MSLM was conducting bird surveys in Kumbira Forest, Cuanza Sul (c.11°09'S 14°17'E; see Ryan *et al.* 2004 for a site description). In an area of densely regrown coffee forest, he heard the typical, low-pitched *hoo* call, repeated for long periods, of a Lemon Dove *Aplopelia larvata* (Urban *et al.* 1986). The call was tape-recorded (copy available at [www.birdangola.com/downloads.htm](http://www.birdangola.com/downloads.htm), and will be archived at the British Library National Sound Archive, London, UK), but the bird was not seen. On 2 August 2006, we flushed two largish, dark doves, intermediate in size between Tambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistria* and Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata*, from the forest floor of a fairly undisturbed part of Kumbira Forest. Both perched nearby, where ADD obtained clear views of one of the birds' brown back, pale face and brownish chest and belly, which confirmed it was a Lemon Dove.

These are the first confirmed records of Lemon Dove for Angola. No mention of the species is made in previous major ornithological country overviews (Traylor 1963, Pinto 1983), though a call thought to be of this species was heard at N'Dalatando (formerly Salazar), Cuanza Norte, in 1973, by C. J. Vernon (Urban *et al.* 1986, Dean 2000). Lemon Dove is probably a fairly widespread resident of scarp forests in central Angola and in Guinea-Congo forests of northern Angola, though the lack of records suggests it is rather scarce. Due to the species' very secretive nature it has almost certainly been under-recorded both here and in neighbouring areas. There are records from the southern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and north-west Zambia near to, or on, the border with Angola, and a single record is available from the lower Congo River in western DRC

(Benson *et al.* 1971, Urban *et al.* 1986, Dean 2000, Leonard 2005). These records led Dean (2000) to speculate that the species might also occur in eastern Angola, in south-eastern Lunda Sul and eastern Moxico.

## Acknowledgements

MSLM thanks Conservation International (particularly Michael Hoffman and Olivier Langrand), and Gus, Margie & Sybil Mills, for making possible his 2005 visit to Angola. Richard Dean and Ron Demey provided comments which helped improve the manuscript.

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## First record of Bob-tailed Weaver *Brachycope anomala* for Angola

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Première mention du Travailleur à queue courte *Brachycope anomala* pour l'Angola. Deux Travaillleurs à queue courte *Brachycope anomala* mâles ont été observés le 31 janvier 2005, à 2 km à l'ouest de la ville de Luínga, sur la Luínga, Province de Malanje, Angola du nord (08°28'S 15°36'E). Ceci constitue la première donnée documentée pour le pays et représente une extension vers le sud de l'aire de distribution connue de cette espèce.

The Bob-tailed Weaver *Brachycope anomala* is virtually confined to the Congo River and its larger tributaries, with a vagrant record from south-east Cameroon (Fry & Keith 2004, Borrow & Demey 2001). It is a little-known and -studied weaver with few recent sight records, the most recent being of c.20+, on 4 September 2006, at Ouessou airport, northern Congo (R. Cassidy pers. comm.).

On 31 January 2005, at 06.45 hrs, two male Bob-tailed Weavers were observed 2 km west of Luínga town, on the Luínga River, Malanje Province, northern Angola (08°28'S 15°36'E). The habitat was a mixture of shorter *Juncus* spp. and taller *Phragmites* spp. reedbeds mixed with rank grass and stubby shrubs, adjoining the Luínga River and its gallery forest, and the area apparently forms a flooded backwater of the river following heavy rains. The weavers were seen flying over and amidst the grasses and reeds. At one stage, they were chased by a female Yellow-mantled Widowbird *Euplectes macroura* and a Chirping Cisticola *Cisticola pipiens*. Both Bob-tailed Weavers were in full nuptial plumage. They were identified by their small size and very short tail, combined with a yellow head, small black mask and robust, dark bill. They were more reminiscent of a small *Euplectes* bishop than a *Ploceus*

weaver. Their flight was very rapid and similar to that of bishops. The birds were not seen to display. Though searched for, no females were seen.

This is the first record of Bob-tailed Weaver for Angola—it does not feature in the country's most recent checklist (Dean 2000)—and constitutes a southerly extension of c.350 km of this species' known range.

### Acknowledgements

I thank my field companions, David & Margot Chamberlain and Pedro vaz Pinto. Ron Demey made useful comments on a draft of this note and Richard Dean provided the coordinates.

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Received 5 October 2006; revision accepted 28 November 2006.